REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Examiner's Office Action of February 21, 2008 issued in relation to the present Patent Application, the Applicant submits Amendments to the claims, and the below Remarks.

Claims 1-9 are pending in the Application. Claim 1 is an independent claim.

Regarding 35 USC 103 Rejections

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Machida (US 7,002,702) in view of Iizuka (US 6,771,385).

Machida teaches with reference to Figure 28 in column 19, lines 1-40, management of log information of devices (device log information) by a management server. Any one of the PCs shown in FIG. 1 may serve as the management server. The printer log information includes an entry for each of the printers which can be identified on the network. Each entry includes fields for storing the cumulative number of logs logged in the printer, the number of total printing pages, toner consumption amount, etc. With regards to the toner consumption amount, that amount is sent from the printer to the management server at the completion of every printing job in the printer.

When a user selects a function on a particular printer form a PC, the management server sends the log information to that PC in order for the PC to decide whether that particular printer can perform the function with the current toner amount.

The printer in Machida, or the toner in the printer, may be construed as a common resource, and the PCs on the network may be construed as a plurality of consumers. Accordingly, Machida may then be said to teach a method of tracking usage of the common resources.

However, Machida fails to teach each PC broadcasting to each of the other PCs a value indicative of an amount of the resources consumed. Similarly, Machida also fails to teach each PC receiving the broadcasted values from the other consumers. In Machida that amount is only sent to or captured by the management server. Finally, Machida fails to teach each PC storing a record of the total of the values that the consumer broadcasted and

the values received from the other consumers. Machida only teaches the management server storing the log information.

Iizuka also fails to teach those features.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the references as applied by the Examiner. Claims 2 to 9 are dependent on allowable claim 1, and are allowable for at least that reason.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that all of the Examiner's rejections have been traversed. Accordingly, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Very respectfully,

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